

December 11, 2018

The Honorable Ajit V. Pai, Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
455 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington DC 20544

Dear Chairman Pai,

**I'm writing to express my strong opposition to the FCC's September 25 Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making in Implementation of Section 621(a)(1) of the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984 as Amended by the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992, MB Docket 05- 311.**

As a newly elected state legislator in Vermont, I represent four rural communities that lie several hours from the nearest major media markets of Burlington (Vermont), Albany (New York) and Springfield (Massachusetts). The television stations in these cities rarely cover news from our region. Instead, we rely on Greater Northshire Access Television (GNAT), a nonprofit community media organization that reaches 7,000 homes and serves 11 towns in the southwestern part of the state.

GNAT tapes and airs our select board, school board, planning commission and other civic meetings. It covers local elections and hosts talk shows, forums and debates. It also provides an outlet for Northshire residents to produce their own shows, exploring topics as wide-ranging as history, government, the environment, food and cooking, religion, sports, business and finances, and travel. GNAT also provides unique services, including youth education, classes and training, equipment and facilities rental, and a bulletin board for public service announcements.

**GNAT is irreplaceable, and the programming it provides is vital to our community.**

The intent of the PEG provisions of the 1984 Cable Act was to enhance local voices, serve local community needs and interests, and strengthen our local democracy. By defining "franchise fee" in an overly broad fashion to include "in-kind" support, the FCC's proposals will shift the fair balance between cable franchising authorities and cable operators. This was not the intent of the Act, and could ultimately result in such reduction in franchise fees as to defund PEG Access in our state.

We appreciate your consideration and hope you will protect PEG channels in our community and others by choosing not to adopt many of the proposals in the Further Notice.

Sincerely,

Kathleen James  
State Rep. Elect (Bennington-4)  
Manchester Center, Vermont

CC: The Honorable Michael O'Rielly, Commissioner  
The Honorable Brendan Carr, Commissioner  
The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel, Commissioner